

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 20, 2022
4:30 PM

REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

Dukes County Commissioners Present: Christine Todd – Chair**, R. Peter Wharton, Tristan Israel, Don Leopold, Keith Chatinover, Leon Brathwaite*, John Cahill

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – Dukes County Manager, Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds, Sarah Kuh – Vineyard Health Care Access Program Director

Others Present: Aidan Pollard –MV Gazette, Abigail Rosen – MV Times, Doug Ruskin, Bob Johnston, James Klingensmith, Leo Convery

Christine called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM

Minutes – 5-25-2022

John /Tristan moved to approve minutes of 5-25-2022. So voted.

Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Don- yes, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

Minutes 7-6-2022

Tristan/ Keith moved to approve minutes 7-6-2022 as amended by Keith. So voted. Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Don- abstained, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

Minutes 7-12-2022

Tristan/Don moved to approve minutes of 7-12-2022. So voted. Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Don- abstained, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

Vice Chair Vote

This is John Cahill's final meeting as County Commissioner. Christine thanked him for his contributions over the years and wished him the best of luck as new Tisbury Selectman.

Peter nominated Don Leopold as Vice Chair. No other nominations. Don did accept the nomination. John seconded the nomination. So voted. Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Don- abstained, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

Martha's Vineyard Commission appointment

Christine decided to resign from the appointment on MVC and would like another commissioner to fill in her seat as of August 1st for the remainder of the term (end of the calendar year 2022).

Don nominated Peter Wharton. Tristan seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. So voted. Peter – abstained, Keith – yes, Don- abstained, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

County Treasurer vacancy – update & next steps

There was a meeting with the CPA, county treasurer, assistant treasurer and one person interested to take over as treasurer temporarily on Monday and it was a very productive meeting. The sub-committee met today. We were still waiting for some legal opinions, which came after the sub-committee meeting. The sub-committee will be meeting on Friday morning again. There will have to be **We are meeting again Friday morning.**

American Rescue Plan Act – Update

John is willing to stay on the committee not as chair but as regular member to help and discuss the issues. The only issue would be if some money is to be distributed to Tisbury, John would have to abstain. Don said that all the sub-committee does is make recommendations to the full commission and no need to actually vote.

Eastville Beach - Leo Convery

Leo thanked the County for getting right on the situation that he raised and cleaned it up before the season. He suggested to get a harder look at perhaps transferring the property to the MV Land Bank as the Land Bank has the funds to keep the property in a good shape. People wanted a handicap access, perhaps a ramp down the beach and keeping it open for the community. Tristan said that in September we should talk about what we can do there and apply for Community Preservation Funds for.

American Rescue Plan Act – Update (continued)

Don shared a presentation (on file) on where the ARPA committee is heading with the recommendations of how to allocate the remaining ARPA funds (approx. \$1M). Throughout the process of evaluating the application and talking to the towns and other stakeholders it was emphasized to invest into a project that would have island-wide benefit, within the priorities that were identified by the Steering Committee (response to Covid, housing and wastewater infrastructure) and to fund a big project instead of multiple smaller projects to keep the administrative costs down. The Review Committee considered and shared the pros and cons for applying the remaining funds to the nitrogen-reducing, innovative alternative (IA) septic systems. It might among other things allow for multi-unit affordable housing developments. The Boards of Health (BOH) are interested in these new systems. There is a potential to leverage the investment with state funding that was designated to installation of these systems. The \$1M would have much greater impact if put towards these systems than if applied to any one of the sewer systems that are overall much more expensive. The committee did propose to create a Special Purpose Fund to invest into installing these IA systems on MV and establish award parameters (environmental impact and social justice considerations) and determine allocation criterion per town (per capita or otherwise), County to serve in a treasury function and have coordinating committee (2 county commissioners, MVC representative and BOH agents) to provide input how to spend the fund down. MV Commission would also have a role, to do the environmental monitoring and look out for grants to further support this. We need to confirm with legal counsel and auditors if this would be within the ARPA regulations as allowable way to spend the funds. Questions were raised about what specifically the funds would be used for (just the added nitrogen-reducing component or a whole septic system, would engineering of the system be also included could we support manufacturing of the concrete/cement components on island to save on having to ship it from off island etc.) Dough Ruskin suggested prioritizing upgrades of existing failed systems not supplementing installation of new systems, ideally in conjunctions with town regulations requiring upgrades in a specific timeframe and using the funds to pay for the differential between regular and the enhanced nitrogen-reducing system, not the full price of the new system. Dough suggested allocating funds based on combination of financial need and the watershed/pond need rather than by town or another formula.

Manager's Contract

County Counsel did not recommend adding arbitration clause and approved the rest of the amendments. The allowance for cellphone was voted during Covid and it is cheaper to reimburse Martina for private plan than to establish commercial county plan. Reimbursement for travel – mileage was always part of the manager contract. (The amendment only clarifies that the rate is based on federally established reimbursement rate as it is updated periodically). Leon questioned sick time buy back section, and it was clarified that right now all employees do get sick time buy back unless they were let go for disciplinary reasons.

Tristan/Don moved to approve the contract in the latest version as submitted to the Commissioners via e-mail prior to this meeting. So voted. Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Don- yes, Tristan – yes, Leon – yes, John – yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

*Leon – left meeting 5:30pm

Manager's Report

- We received request for another Support Letter for legislative amendment in the senate in support of the MV Housing Bank – letter will be sent on behalf of the County Commissioners.
- Grant agreement between MV Hospital and Dukes County in support of the Community Ambassador Project (CAP) for \$20K. The County is the fiscal agent for CAP, which provides community with interpreting services.

Don/John moved to approve the grant agreement and acceptance of the \$20K grant as proposed. So voted. John – yes, Peter – abstained, Keith – yes, Don -yes, Tristan – abstained, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

- Norton Point Beach updates – we received additional letter from public relative to the draft management plan. The idea is that the Trustees will go through their public outreach and meetings with the interest group and town boards and that come back to us so we can give them final opinion as owners of Norton Point about that we would like to see be implemented as part of the plan. Tristan suggested to also solicit public comments for us owners separate from the Trustees. He was concerned about public access.
- State beach patrol is writing tickets, we could still use one more person for couple days to cover the full week.
- Courthouse – AC in the courtroom is broken and we are unable to find contractor to fix it. Martina is working with the trail Court maintenance department on possible alternatives. The electrician was there to assess if window units can be brought instead.

- Administration Building – floors and walls are done in the bathroom and basement room and we are in process of finishing tiling the bathroom and then both rooms need to be painted.
- VHCAP building – we are in the process of evaluating proposals for preparing schematic design. Some are more expensive than others and we need more detail of what is included in each proposal.
- County Advisory Board meeting will be scheduled once we have resolution on development with the Treasurer's position as that will require budget transfers as needed. At that time we will have CAB also vote on the expenditure of the \$20K for the design at the VHCAP building.

****Christine left at 5:45pm, Don took over as chair**

New Business - none

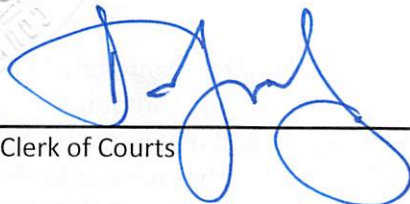
Public Comment – none

Don thanked John Cahill for all he has done in his role as county commissioner and wished him all the best as the Tisbury Selectman and their CAB member.

Tristan/John made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:47PM. So voted. R. Peter Wharton – yes, Keith Chatinover – yes, Tristan Israel – yes, Don Leopold -yes, John Cahill - yes. Motion carries. The Dukes County Commission meeting was adjourned at 5:48PM.

Calendar: Next regular meeting is on August 3, 2022 at 4:30PM

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

Documents presented at the meeting and part of the official record:

- Meeting Agenda
- Draft County manager contract
- ARPA presentation
- Manager's Report